

took on his opponents, particularly through the abuse of women's bodies. We read how he spent his life bragging about his Spanish lineage when he was in fact the son of a mulatto woman. We also witness how Trujillo punished harshly any kind of criticism of his regime through torture, maiming, and murder. The second section of the chapter deconstructs the phallogocentric discourse of some authors and their veiled admiration for the sexual exploits of the Dominican playboy Porfirio Rubirosa and the Trujillo clan.

Chapter six, "After Trujillo: The Ideologeme of the Leftist Militant and the Collapse of the Left," studies Trujillo's legacy of terror in several novels and testimonials. It is not without surprise that the reader finds out that one of Trujillo's acolytes, Joaquín Ballaguer, was elected as his successor. Ignacio López-Calvo quotes several possible causes for Trujillo's downfall as it appears in what he calls the Trujillato narratives: 1) the assassination of the Mirabal sisters, 2) the assassination of Galíndez, 3) the assassination of Gerald Murphy, an American pilot, and 4) the loss of the dictator's usefulness to the United States. The chapter also analyzes the demythification of the leftists who led the resistance against Trujillo and the treatment of homosexuality by Dominican authors.

The conclusion is an in-depth analysis of the Trujillo or Trujillato, a paradoxical, horrific, and theatrically grotesque regime propped up by the United States. *Trujillo and God* offers an insightful and shocking look at one of the worst examples of dictatorship in Spanish America. It is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the causes and effects of Rafael Trujillo's regime.

Justin D. Edwards

Gothic Canada: Reading the Spectre of a National Literature

Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2005. Pp. 231. \$34.95

Reviewed by Jennifer Andrews

Justin Edwards's exploration of "Gothic Canada" combines readings of individual texts—novels and movies—with a larger thematic examination of why Canadian literature continues to be a site of haunting and how that informs constructions of nationalism north of the forty-ninth parallel, especially in an era of increasing globalization. Edwards's monograph is broadly inclusive, analyzing works over two centuries from *Wacousta* (1832), seen as the quintessential gothic pre-Confederation Canadian novel, to *Anil's Ghost* (2000), which, though written by Canadian resident and citizen Michael Ondaatje, is primarily set in Sri Lanka. Divided into eight chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion, *Gothic Canada* charts a course that is both historically informed—moving with chronological consistency from the seventeenth to the twentieth century—and thematically focused, attending to various dimensions of the

gothic including its relationship to the sublime, to the spectral self, to the law, to trauma, and to the world of cyberspace.

Edwards begins the monograph by briefly introducing an extremely flexible definition of the gothic, based on its historical development in British and American fiction, and argues for its portability and relevance to Canada, albeit with different national issues at stake. Edwards is already the author of two books on American fiction including one titled *Gothic Passages: Racial Ambiguity and the American Gothic* and thus is in a unique position to provide border-crossing—and border-differentiating—analyses that are quite helpful in *Gothic Canada*, particularly when discussing the gothic sublime as it functions in depictions of Niagara Falls by Canadian and American authors (such as Henry James and William Dean Howells). Moreover, he repeatedly references some of the key texts of the British gothic tradition as points of comparison, namely *Count Dracula* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, but is also careful to highlight the different contexts and results of its adaptation by New World authors.

In the chapters that follow, all Canadian-focused, Edwards continues this comparative approach by typically pairing two or more novels, plays, and films with a specific thematic concern. For example, in chapter three Edwards uses Frederick Philip Grove's *Search for America*, Sinclair Ross's *As For Me and My House*, and David Adams Richards's *Mercy Among the Children*—texts that span almost the entire twentieth century—to explore what happens to immigrants, women, and the poor who find themselves marginalized by and, as a result, haunt the nation. A later chapter on the law pairs Anne Hébert's *Kamouraska* with Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace*, and Edwards even devotes a chapter specifically to constructions of Indigenous monstrosity and the law through readings of Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* and Yvonne Johnston's *Stolen Life: The Journey of a Cree Woman*. Not surprisingly, the concluding chapters of *Gothic Canada* turn toward a study of diasporic and postcolonial texts (*Anil's Ghost* and Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*), as well as the technology of monsters who become haunting "Others" in works such as William Gibson's *Neuromancer*; such a selection of works is in keeping with on-going debates in Canadian literature over the nation's status vis-à-vis postcolonial and diasporic studies but also the contested notion of the body "as a homely site of identity" in an era of increasing genetic experimentation and other technological innovations that may subvert national and even global borders (xxxiv).

Edwards's book marks a timely return to an important concept in Canadian literature, building on the work of Margot Northey, Margaret E. Turner, and most recently, Jonathan Kertzer to try to understand why Canada is fundamentally haunted as a nation. Certainly the gothic as "a language of terror, panic, and anxiety," which tries to contain that which is uncontainable by virtue of its depravity, corruption, and monstrosity, and thus constantly rests on the brink of destroying what is virtuous and pure, is a fitting if disturbing way to

depict Canada as a fragmented entity (xvii). Edwards also makes an effort to differentiate what he calls “Northern Gothic” from its American and European relations in his introduction; unfortunately he is sidetracked by his American expertise and spends more time explicating what the “southern gothic” means in a U.S. regional context than considering how regionalism could be relevant to gothic readings of Canadian texts. Certainly, *Gothic Canada* covers a wide range of works, incorporating novels by ethnic and racial minorities, the First Nations, and writers and filmmakers living across Canada—from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to British Columbia. However, given the tendency in previous critical studies of the gothic in Canada to use the term “southern Ontario gothic,” as in Michael Hurley’s study of John Richardson, *The Borders of Nightmare*, might regionalism still be relevant? Oddly however, Hurley’s monograph is never mentioned by Edwards.

In addition, there are some limitations to Edwards’s selection of texts. Obviously, the choice of works studied is a personal one, and for every reader the selection may or not seem entirely satisfying; to be fair, most of Edwards’s pairings are thoughtful and compelling. Yet the argument put forth in his chapter on the gothic sublime, which looks at Jane Urquhart’s *The Whirlpool* and Susanna Moodie’s *Life in the Clearings*, would have benefited from the addition of Suzette Mayr’s *The Widows* (1998) to the mix. Mayr’s novel is about a group of older German-Canadian women including a lesbian couple who, haunted by the legacy of Annie Taylor, who was the first woman to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, decide to make the same journey in order to come to terms with their past; while they too experience the gothic sublime when they reach the waterfall, their subsequent trip in a barrel leads to a kind of recuperation that subverts such monstrous renderings of this natural wonder. Likewise, the absence of Eden Robinson’s fiction, particularly *Monkey Beach* (2000), is notable precisely because her rendering of monsters within a Native community raises significant questions about what monsters and ghosts mean to different cultures and how what might appear menacing to some is, in fact, a source of instruction and reassurance for others. But despite these reservations, *Gothic Canada* is a very useful book—well written, lively, able to make the complex accessible without diminishing its sophistication, and certainly an important step toward rethinking what the gothic means for Canadian literature and culture today.

Jane Campbell

A. S. Byatt and the Heliotropic Imagination

Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004. Pp. x + 310. \$42.95

Reviewed by Arnd Bohm

Based on original research, clearly structured, carefully written, and elegantly printed, *A. S. Byatt and the Heliotropic Imagination* is a major contribution on one of the most successful contemporary British writers. Jane